

WOMAN'S COLLEGE MEETS APPROVAL

(Continued From First Page.)

Pines road on the basis suggested, for it would prohibit, without the consent of the State Corporation Commission, the sale or other disposition by any electric railway of any of its branches running into a county without preserving the same rates of fare and the same provisions as to transfers as before.

The Richmond charter bill passed the Senate yesterday under suspension of the constitutional readings, and it will be a law as soon as it can be enrolled and signed by the presiding officers of the two bodies and by the Governor.

Oratory from both men and women will resound throughout the Capitol to-day when the woman suffrage amendments to the Constitution are considered before the House Committee on Privileges and Elections. Among the speakers will be Miss Mary Johnston, Mrs. B. B. Valentine and Mrs. John H. Lewis, the latter of Lynchburg. The women who are working for this cause are busy at the Capitol every day talking vigorously to the members in the lobbies.

Women Fight Suffrage.

But it will not be all on one side. A petition was presented to the committee yesterday largely signed by women opposed to the extension of the suffrage to their sex. The preamble states that numbers have not been sought, but that it includes all classes—wage-earners, school teachers and college graduates, officers of social, literary, charitable, church and missionary associations, nurseries, orphan asylums and hospitals.

This is the platform of the anti-suffragists. "If the suffrage movement were to disband to-day, and no woman would ever vote, not a single great interest would suffer. None of woman's wide philanthropies would be harmed; woman's colleges would be unaffected; the professions would continue to give diplomas to qualified women; tradesmen would still employ women; good laws would not be repealed; literature would not suffer; home would be no less secure; woman's civic work would not cease; nor would there be any more disposition than there is to-day to remove to a State where women already have the ballot."

The Byrd primary bill, which, as stated in The Times-Dispatch of yesterday, was favorably reported on Wednesday night by the Committee on Privileges and Elections, went on the House calendar yesterday.

In joint assembly the appointments of J. Richard Wingfield to the State Corporation Commission, and of W. D. Saunders to be State Dairy and Food Commissioner were confirmed.

Colonel J. R. Templeton, of Augusta, introduced a bill in the House to make the hours of Capitol employees from 9 A. M. to 5 P. M. all the year round, except that on Saturdays from June 1 to September 1 the offices would close at 2 P. M.

HOUSE

Among the bills reported to the House from committee at the opening of the session were the following: To legalize primary elections; to extend probation over habitual drunkards to all cities; to prevent the killing of robbers; to prohibit judges from directing verdicts; to allow plaintiffs to withdraw joinders to demurrers; to reduce the homebased exemption from \$50 to \$25 per month except when the claim is for necessary expenses.

The Speaker appointed Mr. Stephenson, of James City; Mr. Barginin, and Mr. Chalkley as the special committee to ascertain the amount of premiums on fire insurance paid by State departments.

The Jennings resolution, calling on the Governor and the Secretary of the Commonwealth to restore the use of the true seal of the State on official papers

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and flags, reported from the Committee on Library, was agreed to.

Convict Labor Resolution.

The Holt resolution, as amended and passed by the Senate, was reported from the Committee on Asylums and Prisons. Hill Montague moved to concur, and A. M. Bowman moved as a substitute that it be sent to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. Montague pointed out that the resolution merely says that the present contract for convict labor shall not be renewed—which nobody proposes shall be done. It does not say that no new contract shall be made. For himself, he wanted the convicts worked on the roads "as far as practicable." He thought the State would be better off than in working the men by contract.

Mr. Bowman said that he would agree that the present contract should not be renewed. But he thought it more a financial question than any other, and that therefore the Finance Committee was the proper body to consider it.

Mr. Love hoped the paper would go to the Committee on Roads, as stated in the resolution itself.

Debate on Reference.
Judge M. W. Williams said that it would do no good to have the Committee on Roads work on the proposition unless it knew what the State could afford to do.

Edwin P. Cox said the plans must be made before the State can know how much money it will take. There was some cross-firing of question and answer between Mr. Cox and Judge Williams, the former saying that the Roads Committee should first have the matter.

Mr. Chalkley said there is a general demand for better roads. Mr. Adams said the House ought to concur in the joint resolution, and Mr. Steetie said that if the House hadn't got the money it ought to make appropriations to build roads.

The Bowman motion was defeated, the resolution agreed to, and the whole matter sent to the Committee on Roads and Internal Navigation.

On behalf of the Business Men's Club, the members of the House were invited to a buffet luncheon at the club rooms to-day at any hour between 12 and 4 o'clock.

On motion of Dr. Stephenson, 500 copies of the woman's college bill were ordered printed.

Mr. Montague presented a petition in behalf of woman suffrage.

Set Tax Bill Debate.

Mr. Bowman moved that the Tax Commission bill be made a special and continuing order for Thursday, January 25, at 12:30 o'clock. Mr. Montague said he would have amendments to present at that time.

The hour of 1 o'clock having arrived, the Senate came into the hall.

Speaker Byrd presiding, and a joint session was held. On motion of Chairman Featherston, of the Joint Committee on Nominations, the Assembly confirmed the appointments of J. Richard Wingfield to the State Corporation Commission, and of W. D. Saunders to be State Dairy and Food Commissioner.

The consideration of the Bowman resolution was resumed, and Mr. Montague, to test, as he said, the sense of the House on the subject, moved that the Tax Commission bill be set for January 29. This was defeated—aye, 22; noes, 68. Then the order was made for January 25, and 1,000 copies of the bill as reported by the committee were ordered printed.

Bills Are Passed.

The calendar being reached, the House passed the following bills:

To provide for the organization of county boards of poor commissioners. To authorize and empower the use of money acquired in consideration of school buildings which have been annexed to cities, to use the money for more school buildings.

To companion bills regulating the transportation and delivery of bodies dead from contagious and infectious diseases, by allowing shipments to the State Anatomical Board on regulations by the State Board of Health.

Then came the Stephenson bill, providing for remedy in motion after thirty days' notice for any tort. Mr. Coleman, of Norfolk, moved to pass the bill by until to-day.

Mr. Lunsford, of Hotelourt, opposed the motion, saying that the intent of the bill was to put action of tort on the same basis as cases ex contractu.

Effect on Procedure.
Mr. Coleman thought the bill would complicate instead of simplify procedure. Now, he said, when a case is put on demurrers, the plaintiffs know where they are, while if a change is made it will take ten years to have the Supreme Court finally say when the legislation is properly made. He thought it an unnecessary complication.

The motion to pass by was lost, and the measure placed on its final passage. Mr. Cox addressed the House in opposition. He said if the plaintiff now makes a mistake he finds it out on demurrer, but would not find out his mistakes in this instance.

Mr. Stephenson, the patron, characterized it as a bill to prevent delay. Robert Gilliam, Jr., of Petersburg, said it was in the interest of the people of the State.

Mr. Willeroy said there had been too much distinction between actions ex contractu and for damages. He thought lawyers, like other people, ought to be progressive. He made some reference to railroad attorneys opposing the bill, but on a suggestion from Mr. Cox, he said he did not mean that any were improperly influenced as members of the Legislature.

Upon a roll call the bill was passed, 60 to 18.

At 2:07 the House adjourned.

SENATE

President Pro Tem Echols, of Augusta, presided when the Senate convened at noon with prayer by Dr. E. Callach, of Beth Abrahah Synagogue. The reading of the journal was dispensed with and reports were heard from several committees.

Upon motion of Senator Harman, the committee was discharged from further consideration of the bill passed by the House authorizing the city of Richmond to create an Administrative Board of the City Council, and the reading of the bill on three successive days dispensed with. The bill was placed on its passage and passed.

Senator Featherston presented a joint resolution providing for a joint session of the houses at 1 o'clock to ratify the appointments of W. D. Saunders as State Dairy and Food Commissioner, and J. Richard Wingfield, as member of the State Corporation Commission. The Senate met with the House at the time appointed and endorsed the two nominees.

Game Season Closed.

Senator Gravitt moved that the Senate Committee on Fish and Game be discharged from the further consideration of the bill reported from the House providing for the immediate closing of the game season. He called attention to the emergency nature of the measure and asked that it be passed at once. The motion carried unanimously, and the bill was passed. The introduction of ten new bills followed.

The House bill appropriating money for the contingent and incidental expenses of the General Assembly passed its third reading. Senate bills that passed on their second reading were:

To amend the Code of Virginia in reference to medical attendance, medicines and clothing for indigent prisoners in jail, and analyses in poison cases.
To authorize any county which, together with a city, shall constitute a judicial circuit Court, to increase the salary of the circuit judges.
To constitute certain county and State officers special conservators of the peace.

Bills that passed on their first reading were:
To require a course of instruction to be given in civic training in all public high schools and all higher institutions of learning supported by the State.
To authorize the Board of Supervisors of Isle of Wight county to build a bridge across Jones Creek.

HOUSE BILLS

The following were presented and referred under Rule 27:

To the Committee on Schools and Colleges.

By Mr. Mossley: A bill to amend an act to provide for authorizing county and city school boards to sell or exchange public school property, extending the same provisions to district school boards.

To the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. Mossley: A bill for the purchase of Hyattsville quarries and for the grinding and burning of limestone and limshell by the State, and to provide for same.

By Mr. Curtis: A bill to appropriate \$100,000 for the purchase of the painting entitled "Last of the Navy."

By Mr. Land: A bill to fix the amount of license tax to be paid by each and every express company operating a mileage in the State.

By Mr. Brown, of Westmoreland: A bill in relation to payment of fees to officers out of the treasury in criminal cases.

To the Committee on Roads and Internal Navigation.

By Mr. Throckmorton: A bill to prohibit public service corporations owning and operating street railways or trolley or electric lines, which have branch line or lines extending from incorporated cities and towns into adjoining counties, and running, operating and along the public county roads of such counties, from disposing of such branch line or lines so as to change the rate of fare or transfer privileges without first obtaining permission from the State Corporation Commission.

To the Committee on Officers and Offices.

By Mr. Templeton: A bill to amend section 26 of the Code of Virginia.

By Mr. Chalkley: A bill to amend section 26 of the Code of Virginia.

By Mr. Fitzhugh: A bill to prohibit

LEGISLATIVE COMMENT

BY LEWIS H. MACHEN.

PRIMARIES

The favorable report by the House Committee on Elections of the Byrd primary bill, with a few minor amendments, indicates the early passage of the bill by the House. Senator Featherston has introduced substantially the same bill in the Senate.

Gravitt has presented one somewhat more elaborate and considerably more stringent. It contains a compulsory feature, which is lacking in the other. Senator Gravitt's bill also those provisions of the general law which regulate the manner in which the ballots shall be prepared and cast are set forth specifically, while in the Byrd-Featherston measure they are incorporated by reference. In that respect the Gravitt bill is the better. The compulsory provision of the latter bill, however, would be certain to cause its defeat.

Primary legislation has been defeated at least four times by dilatory tactics. The prospect is that nothing can prevent its arriving at the voting stage in both houses at this session. Truly, the hopes of the people for a legalized primary have been made sick at heart.

Under the present Democratic party plan primaries are compulsory in the State at large in case of United States Senators and State officers. In legislative districts they have been optional, but have for many years been proven so popular that only in a few sections, with special conditions, have there been any objections to them.

In short, the executive and legislative branches of the State are controlled by officers who become elected through the medium of the primary. Therefore, the whole State—Republicans as well as Democrats—has an interest in seeing that the primary can be made.

Since the primary keeps many good men from becoming aspirants, and is a burden upon those who do

aspire for nominations, all good citizens of both parties should be willing that the expense of the primary should be borne, as those of the general election, out of the State, county and city treasuries. This is one of the chief necessities for a legalized primary.

Another most pressing reason is that there should be regularity in the time of holding the primary. A man who offers for a nomination should know in advance just when the contest is to be closed. The committee should be agreed from the temptation of juggling the date to suit its favorite aspirants.

While the present law, as construed in recent months by the Court of Appeals, can reach some of the grosser kinds of primary frauds when discovered, there are so many opportunities for them to be covered up and the evidence of them destroyed, as well as for the open commission of minor offenses, that the present penal statute is of slight practical value.

Under the present party plan no court has a right to entertain an appeal, which must in every case be decided by the appropriate committee. However fair these committees may be, they are almost invariably partisans of some of the aspirants, and accordingly biased in their judgments. At any rate, they are liable to be suspected of partiality, and dissatisfaction results. Both of the proposed primary bills provide for appeals to courts, as in the case of regular elections. It is not supposed that appeals will be of frequent occurrence, but the fact that they are allowed by law will go a long way toward securing a careful performance of duty on the part of judges and clerks of elections in receiving, weighing, and counting ballots and certifying the returns.

This session should witness a thoroughgoing primary statute on the books which should be strengthened from session to session as experience may dictate.

REDISTRICTING

This is the year for redistricting the State as regards both the congressional and legislative districts. To divide a pie among a number of hungry boys and not create dissatisfaction is an easy task compared with ceasing the lines of the various districts without evoking a storm of protest and prayers.

Colonel Bowman's bill to reform the congressional districts—using the term in its literal sense—is about as likely to pass in its present form as a bill for every member of Congress. The best it is likely to do is to propose radical changes in any number of districts has the slightest chance of passage. The best opinion seems to be that Smyth county will be taken out of the Ninth District and put into the Tenth.

There is a reason for this. Further than that, no one seems willing to prophesy. It is recognized, of course, that the Ninth District is much too large, just as the Seventh and Eighth are too small. Perfect

equalization is not possible, and is certainly not desirable from a political standpoint. It does not exist and is not attempted in any State in the Union. The best that is usually expected is discrepancy which is not too glaring and the shaping of districts which will not resemble streaks across the map.

As to the legislative districts, the situation is much more acute. Considerable adjustment will be necessary, and must be done by the gentlemen who may be more or less seriously affected by it. Of course, it is asking much of any legislator that he place himself in a strange and perhaps hostile district. Several plans have been worked out which involve this very situation. None of them can pass as originally proposed. The clash and clang of conflicting political interests and ambitions will be heard over them all. One bill is about as good as another as a starting point. The stopping point is far from being in sight.

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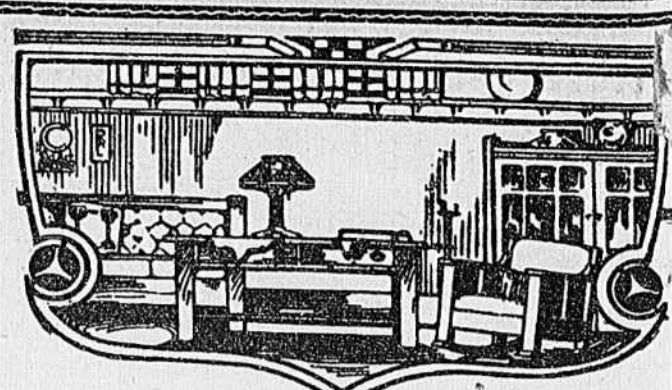
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